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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BISHKEK 000890

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SUBJECT: KYRGYZ PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR AND AMBASSADOR DISCUSS
NEXT STEPS AT MANAS TRANSIT CENTER, CSTO SUMMIT, AND
RUSSIAN BASE

REF: BISHKEK 880

Classified By: Ambassador Tatiana C. Gfoeller, for Reasons 1.4 (b) and
(d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: The Ambassador and Manas Transit Center Director briefed President Bakiyev's Foreign Policy Advisor Moldogaziev August 6 on the upcoming construction projects at the Manas Transit Center. Moldogaziev was extremely pleased to receive the detailed information but had been unaware that the Embassy had already received permission from the MFA to begin the construction process. Moldogaziev told the Ambassador that the informal CSTO Summit has been "effective" and had achieved its modest goals of "clearing the air" after the previous "tense" meeting of the group. Regarding the MOU on the second Russian base, Moldogaziev acknowledged that many details on the base still needed to be "discussed" with Russia and that the base could fall under the umbrella of the Collective Rapid Reaction Forces. END SUMMARY.

TRANSIT CENTER BRIEFING

12. (C) In a cordial meeting on August 6, Moldogaziev told the Ambassador that he wanted to follow-up on earlier discussions he had with the Embassy in July regarding receiving approval to move forward on the construction projects at the Transit Center. Moldogaziev was completely unaware that the Embassy had already received approval from the Minister of Foreign Affairs on August 5 (REFTEL). After reviewing a copy of the Diplomatic Note provided to him by the Ambassador, Moldogaziev said he was pleased that the Transit Center had finally received approval.

13. (C) The Director briefed Moldogaziev on the Transit Center construction projects and the next steps in the process. He explained that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would announce the selection of the primary contractor. He highlighted with Moldogaziev the pending issue of the lease at the airport and said that the Transit Center was working with the Manas International Airport (MIA) authorities to resolve it. (NOTE: MIA signed the leases at the Transit Center on the afternoon of August 6. END NOTE). The Director emphasized to Moldogaziev that discussions regarding subcontracting opportunities would likely follow the

announcement of the general contracting award enabling the participation of Kyrgyz companies.

14. (C) The Director told Moldogaziev that the Transit Center was preparing to organize a "vendors conference" in October to explain to local Kyrgyz companies how the U.S. Department of Defense procurement system worked in order to assist local companies to compete for DOD contracts and requests for proposals. He also briefed Moldogaziev on the USD 30 million air traffic control system upgrade, explaining the current survey of Kyrgyzstan's air systems.

15. (C) Moldogaziev was extremely pleased to receive the briefing and asked many detailed questions, including about the USD 20 million Economic Development Fund. The Ambassador said that the U.S. was still working on the details of the Fund and coordinating closely with the MFA, noting that Foreign Minister Sarbayev would probably be traveling to the U.S. in the fall. Moldogaziev said the vendors conference was a good idea and would assist local companies in playing a more active role in projects at the Transit Center and competing for other U.S. military contracts. Moldogaziev also said that with the updated air traffic systems, Kyrgyzstan should also update its air fleet with modern U.S.-made aircraft. Smiling broadly, he explained that he had just given a hint of what the Kyrgyz might be asking the USG for help with next.

CSTO Informal Summit

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16. (C) Moldogaziev briefed the Ambassador on the recent informal Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) Summit held on Lake Issyk-Kul. He said that the meeting had been effective and had achieved its modest goals. He emphasized its "informal nature" and highlighted that all the CSTO Presidents had attended. He said that the Summit had been able to fill some gaps from the previous CSTO summit in Moscow. Particularly, it had "cleared the air" after the previous "tense" meeting.

17. (C) Responding to a direct question from the Ambassador, he claimed that there not had been any discussion of the new Manas Transit Center during the CSTO meetings. Chuckling, he explained that "since it happened the day before President Bakiyev's birthday, no one wanted to raise unpleasant subjects and spoil the atmosphere. The Presidents just wanted to relax together, man to man."

NEW RUSSIAN BASE

18. (C) Regarding the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between Russia and Kyrgyzstan on the opening of a second Russian base in southern Kyrgyzstan, Moldogaziev said that the final details on the base and its composition still needed to be negotiated with Russia. In addition, the new base could host Collective Rapid Reaction Forces, according to Moldogaziev, and could be open to all CSTO member states. Moldogaziev acknowledged Uzbek opposition to it but far from being deterred by it, seemed pleased that Kyrgyzstan had found a way of poking Uzbekistan in the eye -- especially with Russian protection. His claimed inability to provide details on the new base may indicate that the government has not finished formulating a plan on how to implement a new Russian and/or CSTO base. Alternatively, the Kyrgyz may have been asked by the Russians to keep these details from us.

19. (C) COMMENT: The meeting with Moldogaziev was positive and indicated his interest in assisting the Embassy and the Manas Transit Center. The detailed briefing on the construction projects and next steps is another important step in educating the Government of Kyrgyzstan on the Transit Center and possible commercial opportunities for Kyrgyz

companies. Moldogaziev's lack of information on the
Diplomatic Note approving the construction projects at the
Transit Center confirms that FM Sarbayev is keeping his
discussions with the U.S. extremely close-hold. END COMMENT.
GFOELLER